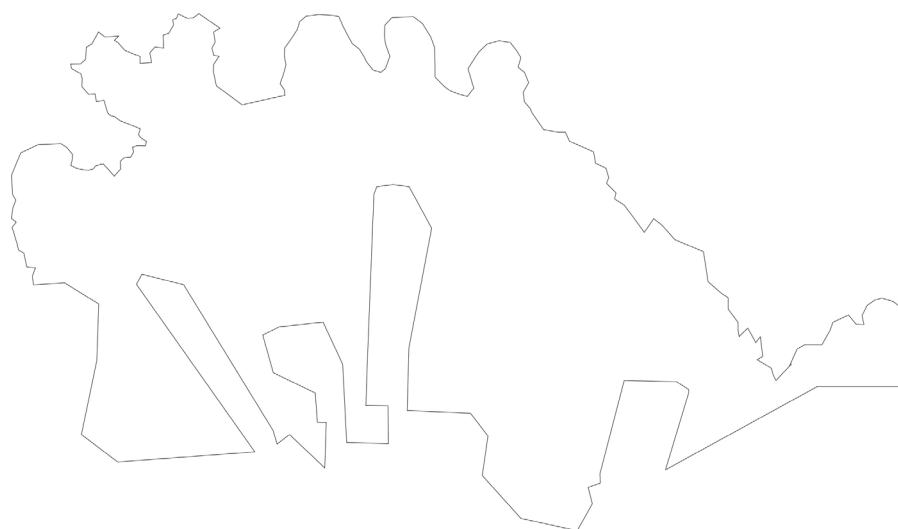


# MAPS

MIDDLE LANDSCAPES IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO SKOPJE



Gjorgjievski Nikola



# MIDDLE LANDSCAPES

## PART TWO: A PECULIAR PART OF SKOPJE'S MIDDLE LANDSCAPE

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"All material including photographs and maps, unless otherwise stated, is by the author"

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Arkitektur- og designhøgskolen i Oslo  
The Oslo School of Architecture and Design

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*“When architecture and urban design project their desire onto a vacant space, a terrain vague, they seem incapable of doing anything other than introducing violent transformations, changing estrangement into citizenship, and striving at all costs to dissolve the uncontaminated magic of the obsolete into the realism of efficacy.”<sup>1</sup> - Ignasi de Sola-Morales, 1995*



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notions about the regional metropolis

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## PART TWO: MIDDLE LANDSCAPES

BRIEF HISTORY OF SKOPJE, 1960 - 2015



SKOPJE, 41.9973° N, 21.4280° E

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^ - REGIONAL MAP OF MACEDONIA, NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES AND HIGHWAYS

< - BLAGOJ BANJANSKI, PHOTOGRAPH OF TWO YOUNG GIRLS IN SKOPJE, 1960

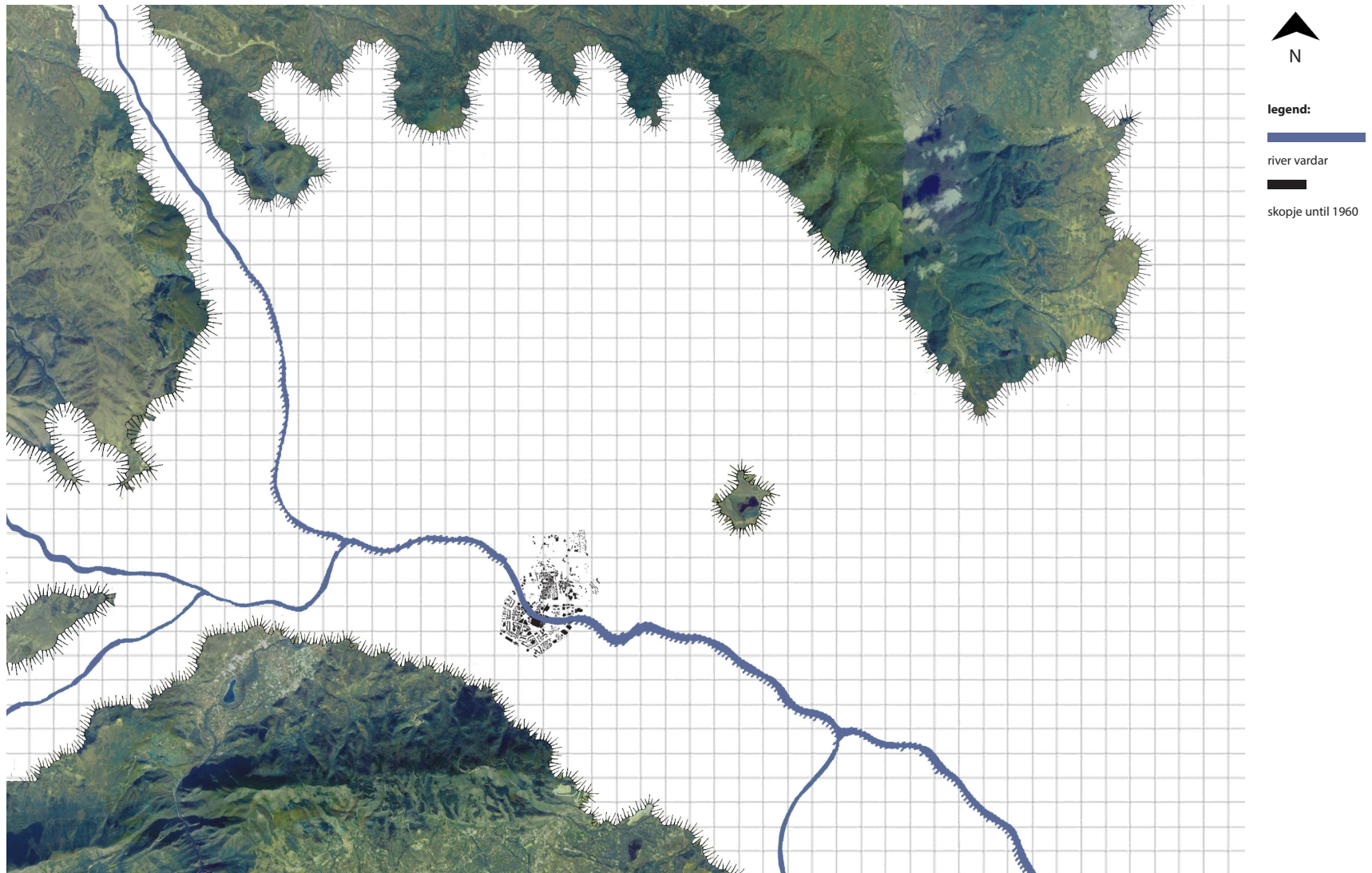




## SKOPJE 1960

### the skopje valley

The Skopje valley is bordered on the West by the Šar Mountains, on the South by the Jakupica range, on the East by hills belonging to the Osogovo range, and on the North by the mountain Skopska Crna Gora. The main river Vardar (east-west) and river Serava (north-west)



^ - MAP OF SKOPJE IN EARLY 1960's, THE BUILT FOOTPRINT, RIVERS VARDAR AND SERAVA, SURROUNDING MOUNTAINS

< - UNKNOWN AUTHOR, NORTHERN LANDSCAPE VIEW OF SKOPJE (MOUNTAIN SKOPSKA CRNA GORA)

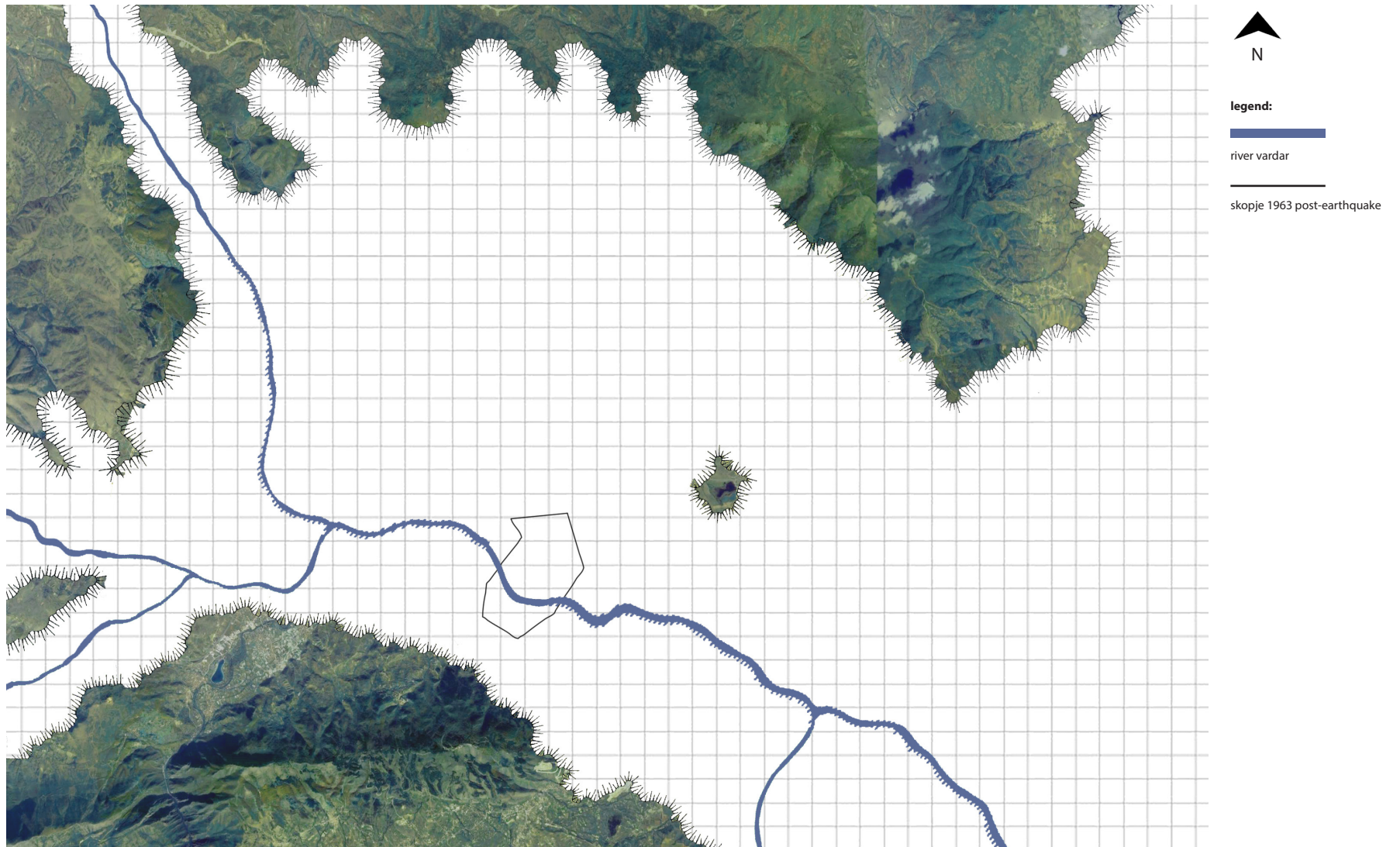




## SKOPJE 1963

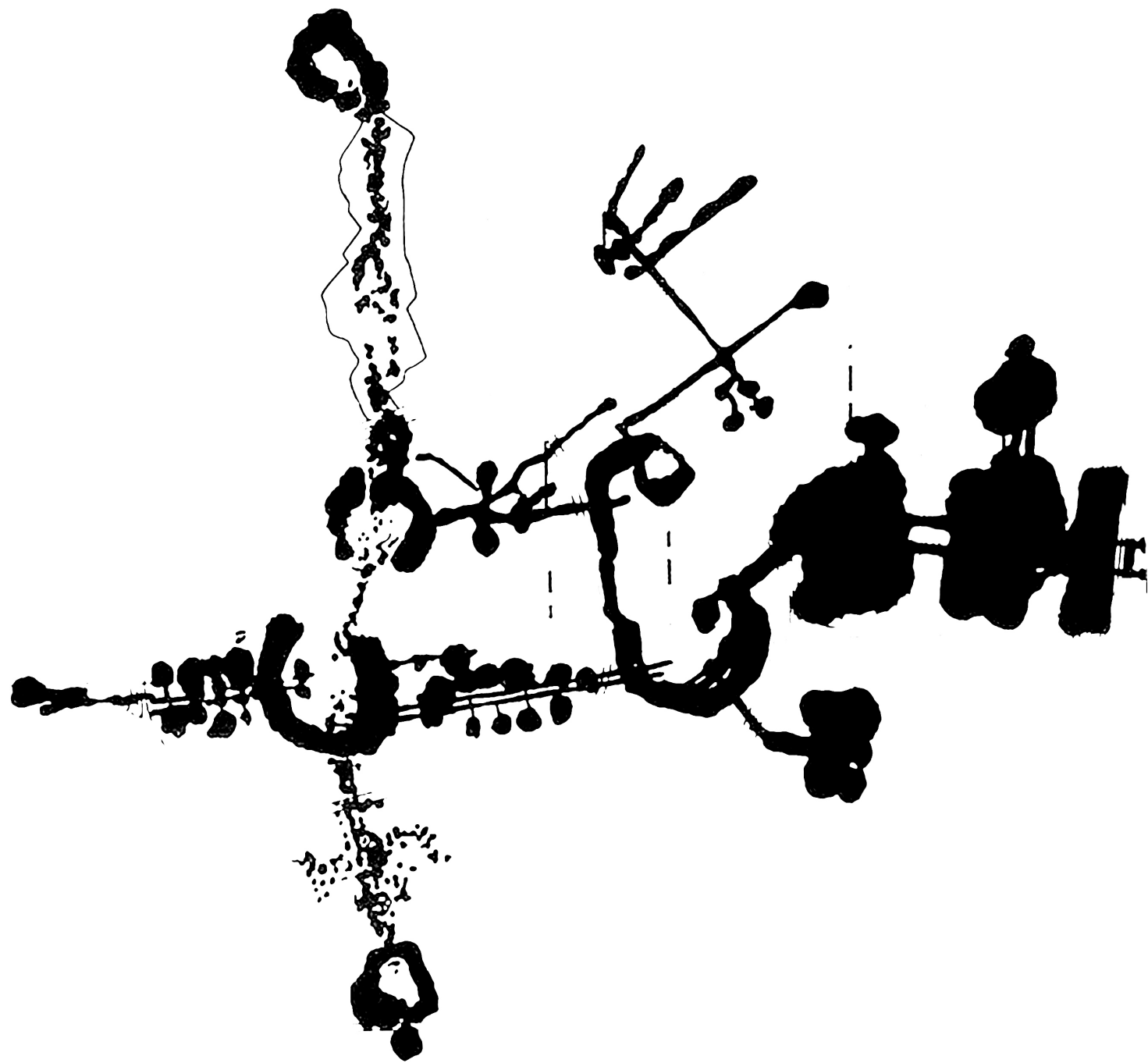
### skopje earthquake

the tremor was a 6.1 moment magnitude earthquake which occurred in Skopje, Macedonia, then part of the SFR Yugoslavia, on July 26, 1963, which killed over 1,070 people, injured around 4,000 and left more than 200,000 people homeless. About 80 percent of the city was destroyed.



^ - MAP OF SKOPJE WITH THE BOUNDARY OF THE DESTROYED CITY

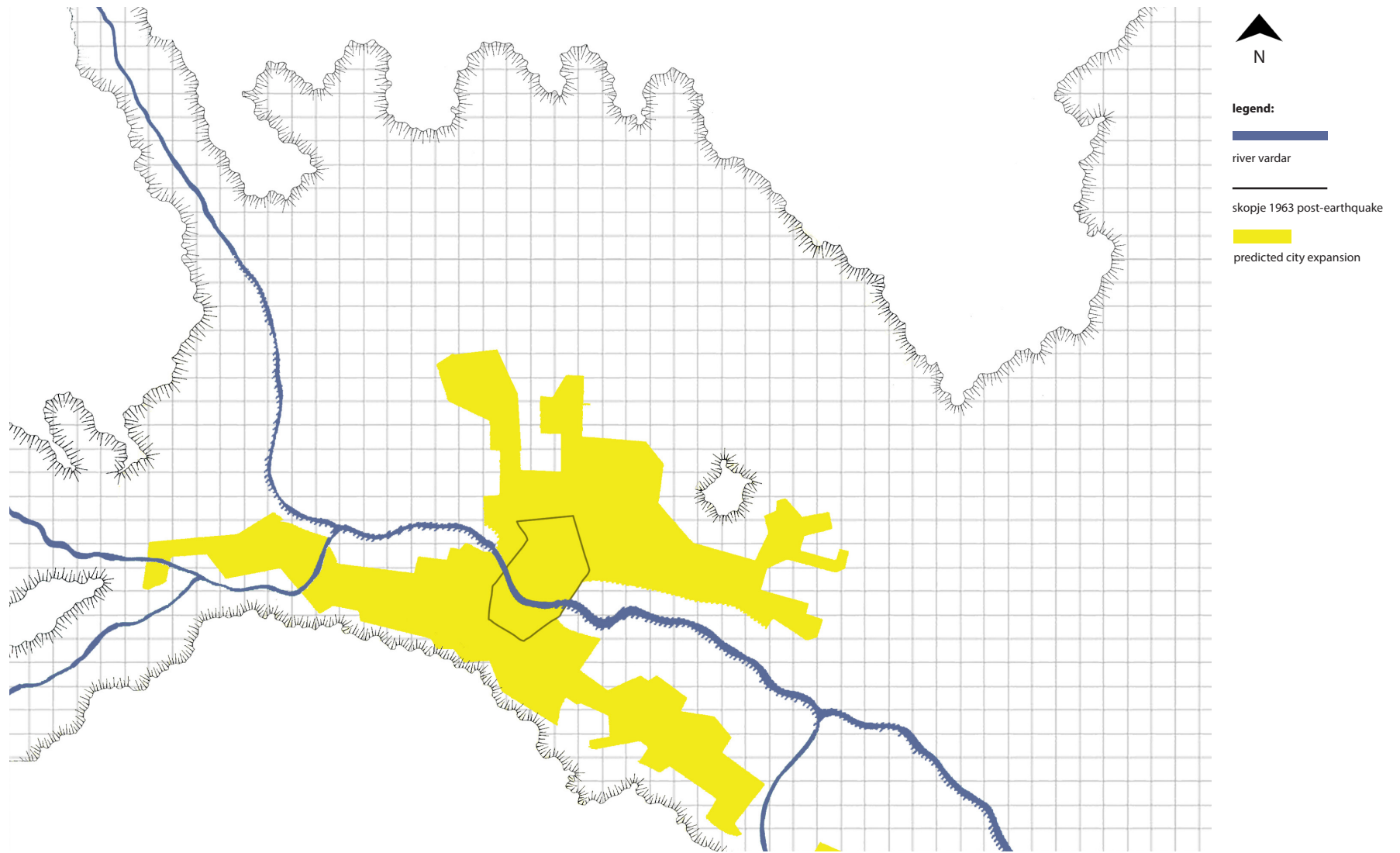
< - DAILY NEWSPAPER "NOVA MAKEDONIJA", HEADLINE FRONT PAGE, 1963



## MODERN SKOPJE

### a post earthquake plan for reconstruction

in January, 1965, Kenzo Tange received a telegram from the United Nations asking if he would be interested in participating in an international planning competition for the reconstruction of Skopje, the regional capital of the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.



^ - MAP OF PREDICTED CITY EXPANSION AND THE BOUNDARY FOR THE NEW METABOLIST MASTER PLAN

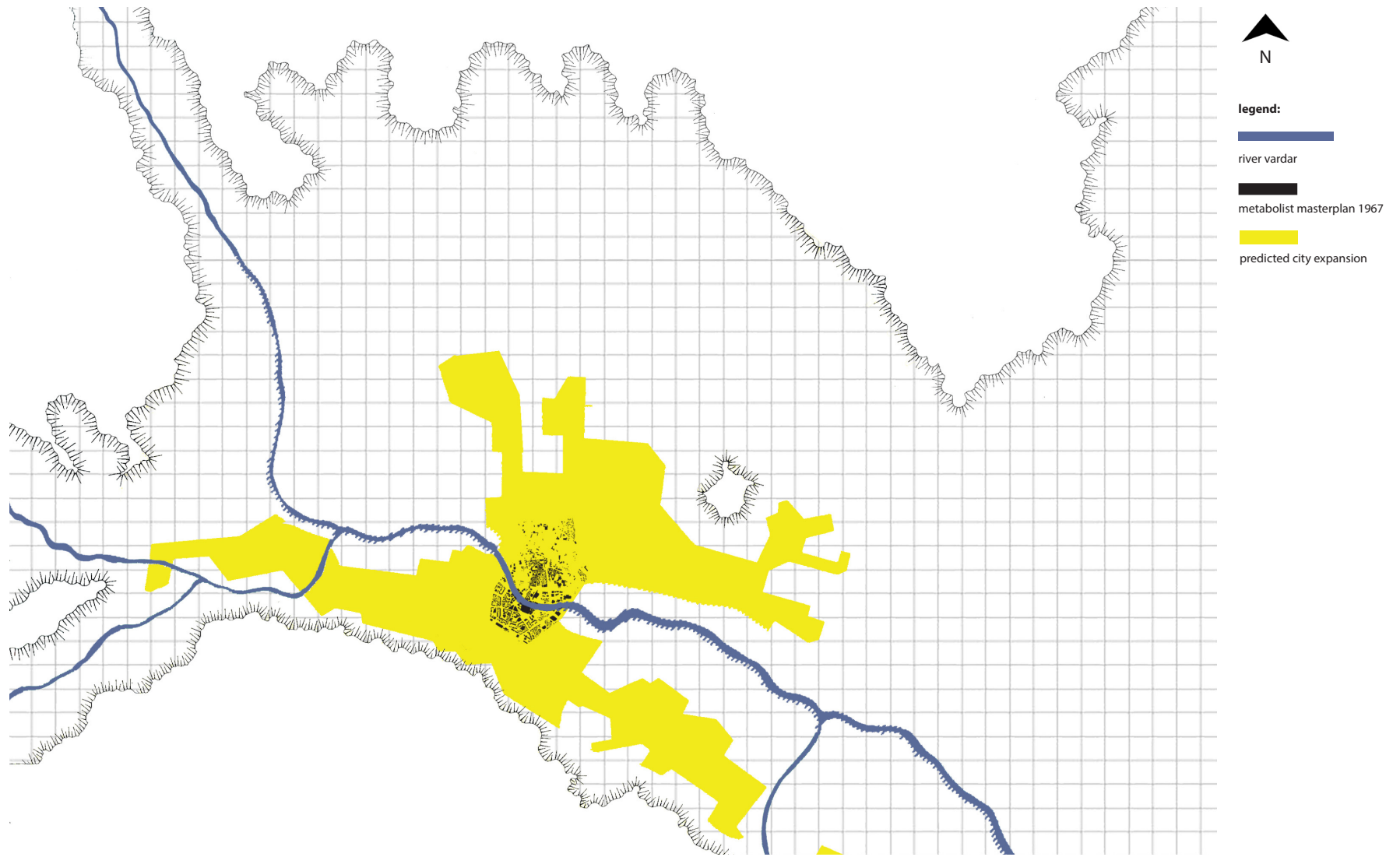
< - ARATA ISOZAKI, LAST PHASE DIAGRAM OF SKOPJE-1980, 1965



## METABOLIST SKOPJE

### a post-war Japanese vision for the new metropolis

after the devastating earthquake in 1963, Skopje was largely rebuilt according to the metabolist master plan by Kenzo Tange, supported by the United Nations and partly executed by local architects. The master plan mainly occupied the central area of the city, as a new focus point.



^ - MAP OF PREDICTED CITY EXPANSION AND THE NEW METABOLIST MASTER PLAN

< - KENZO TANGE'S MODEL FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF SKOPJE, 1967

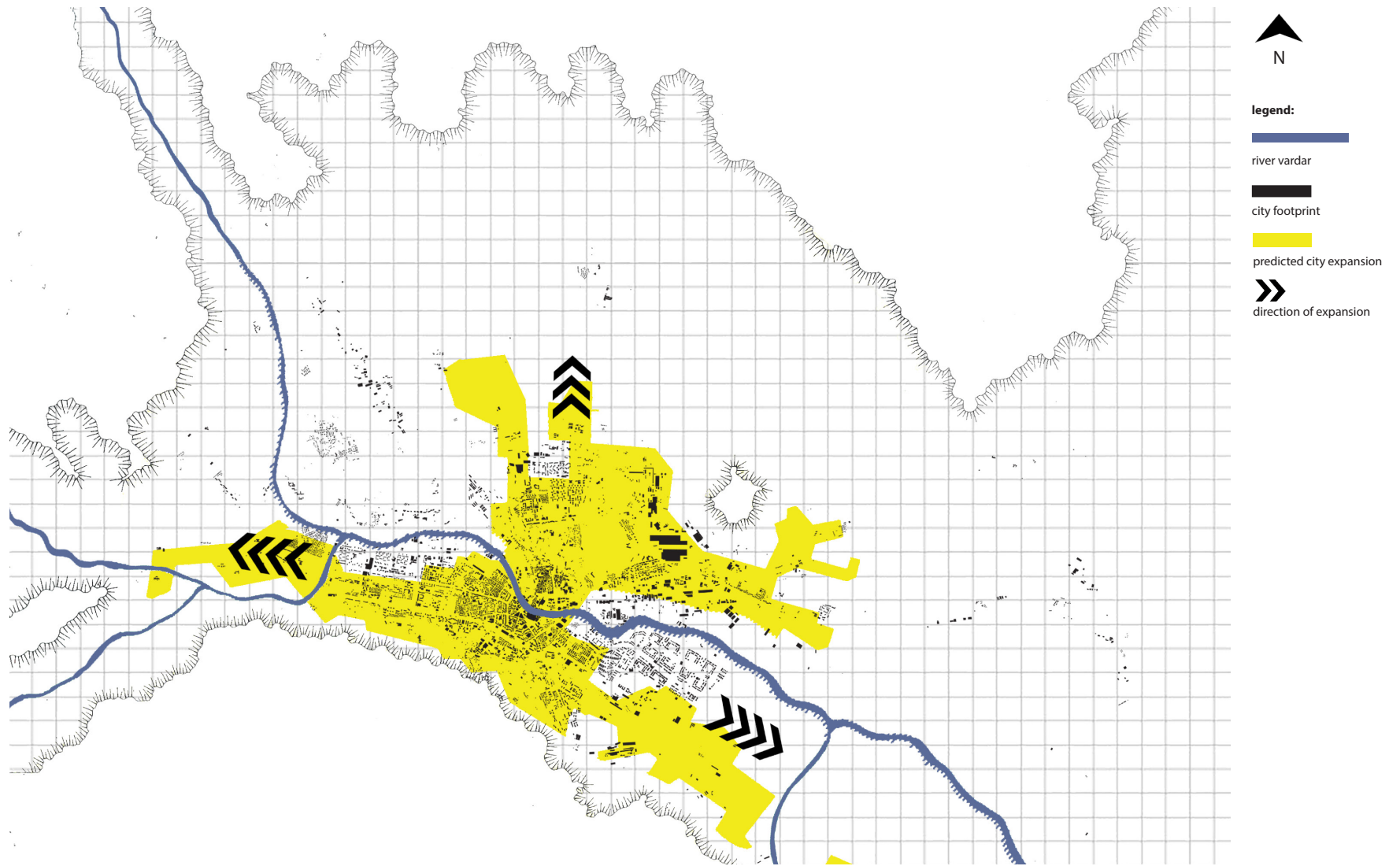






## RUSH HOUR EXPANSION

rapid development of Skopje's east-west axis in 1980's and 1990's  
in the course of three decades the city withheld developments and expansions with great agility.  
a new linear city parallel to the river.



^ - MAP OF SKOPJE'S FOOTPRINT AFTER THE RAPID DEVELOPMENT +INDICATING DIRECTIONS OF GROWTH

< - UNKNOWN AUTHOR, AERODROM, A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD IN SKOPJE, 1990's





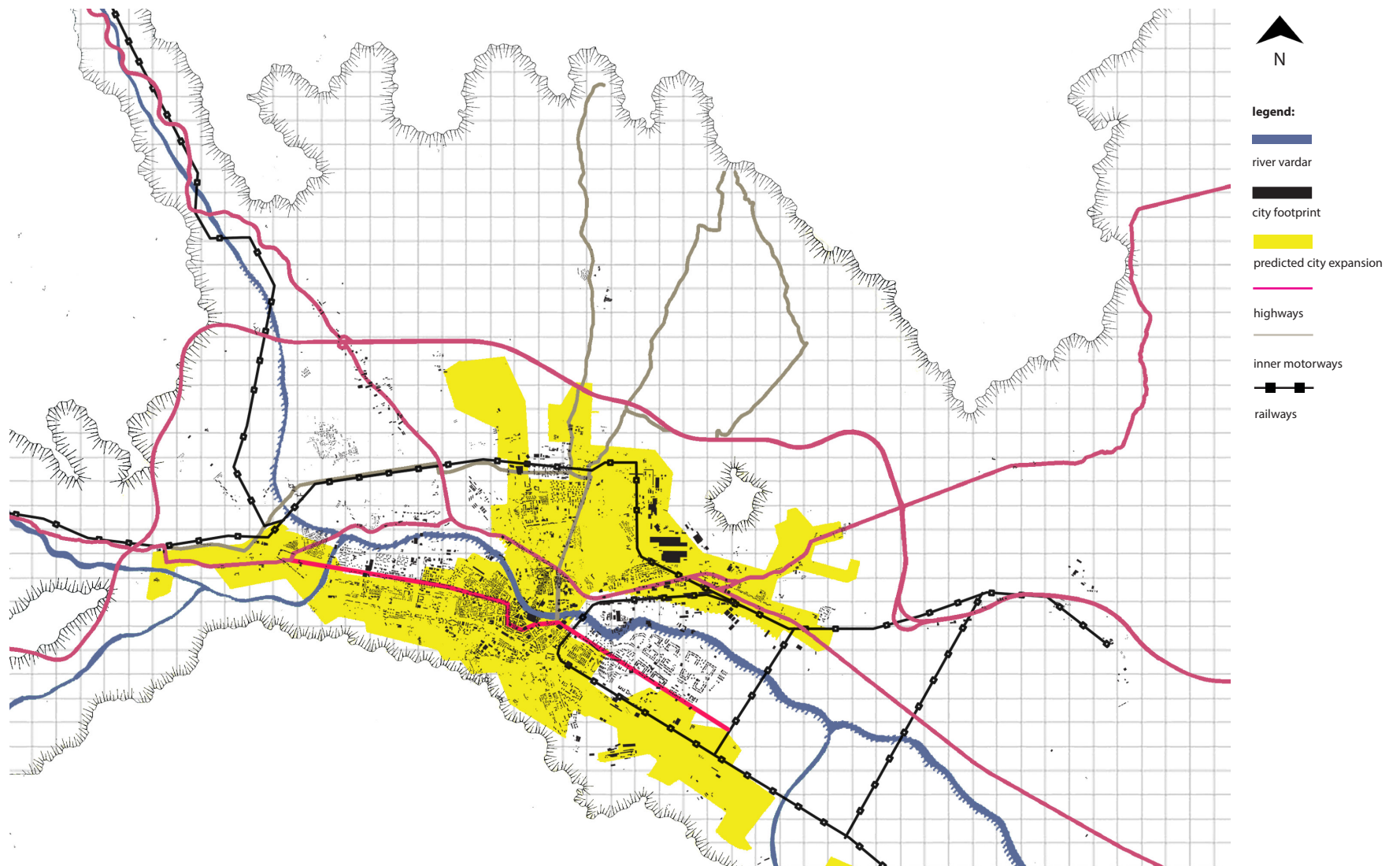
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## SKOPJE INFRASTRUCTURE CONDITIONS

central stations, railways, motorways, roads

the main means of transport in Skopje is the car. The public transport is solely consistent of bus lines. Everyone had a Yugo.



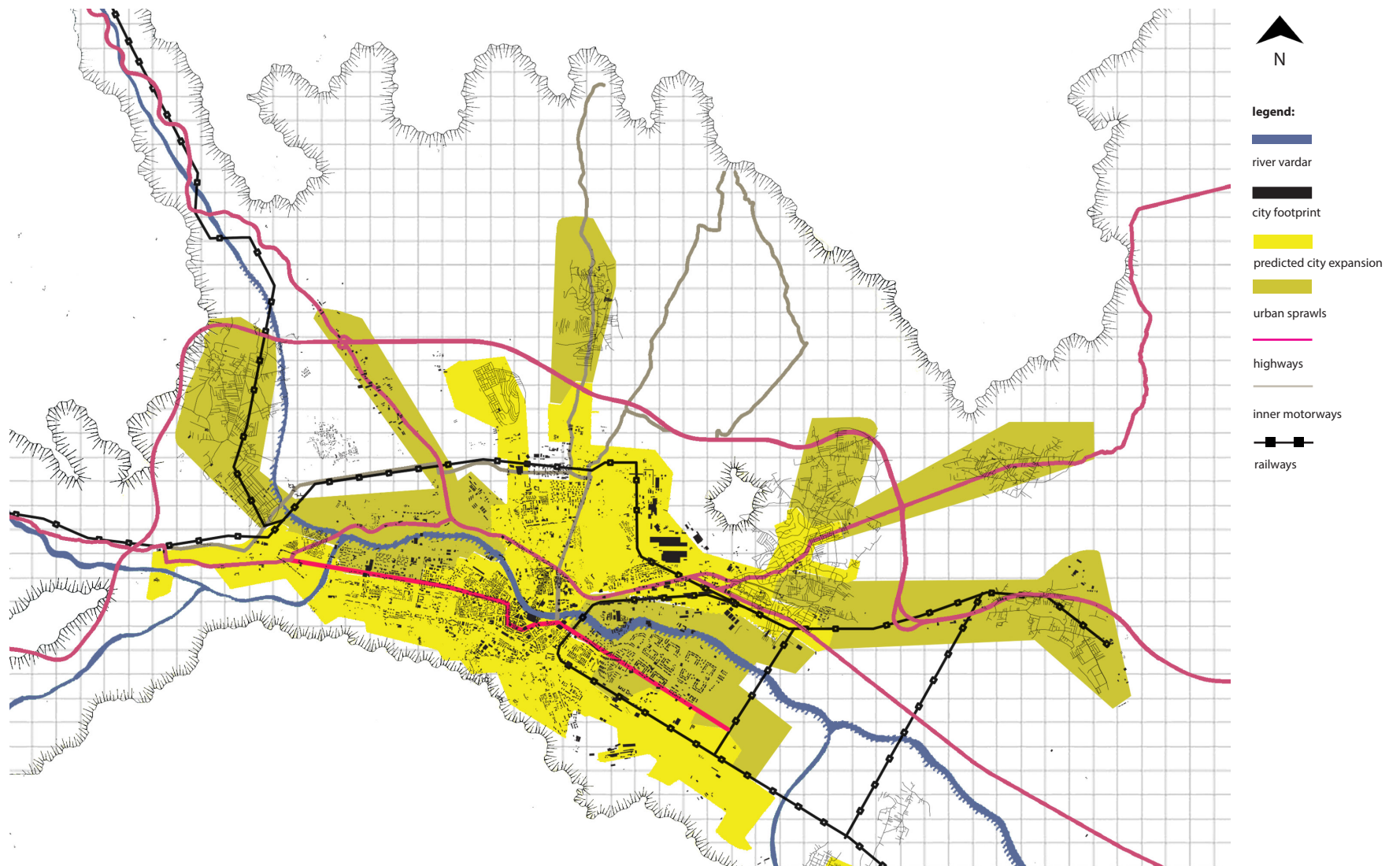
^ - MAP OF SKOPJE SHOWING THE MAIN MOTORWAY ROOTS, INNER HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC RAILROADS

< - UNKNOWN AUTHOR, YUGO CAR COMMERCIAL, 1986, USA



## EMERGENCE OF SPRAWLS

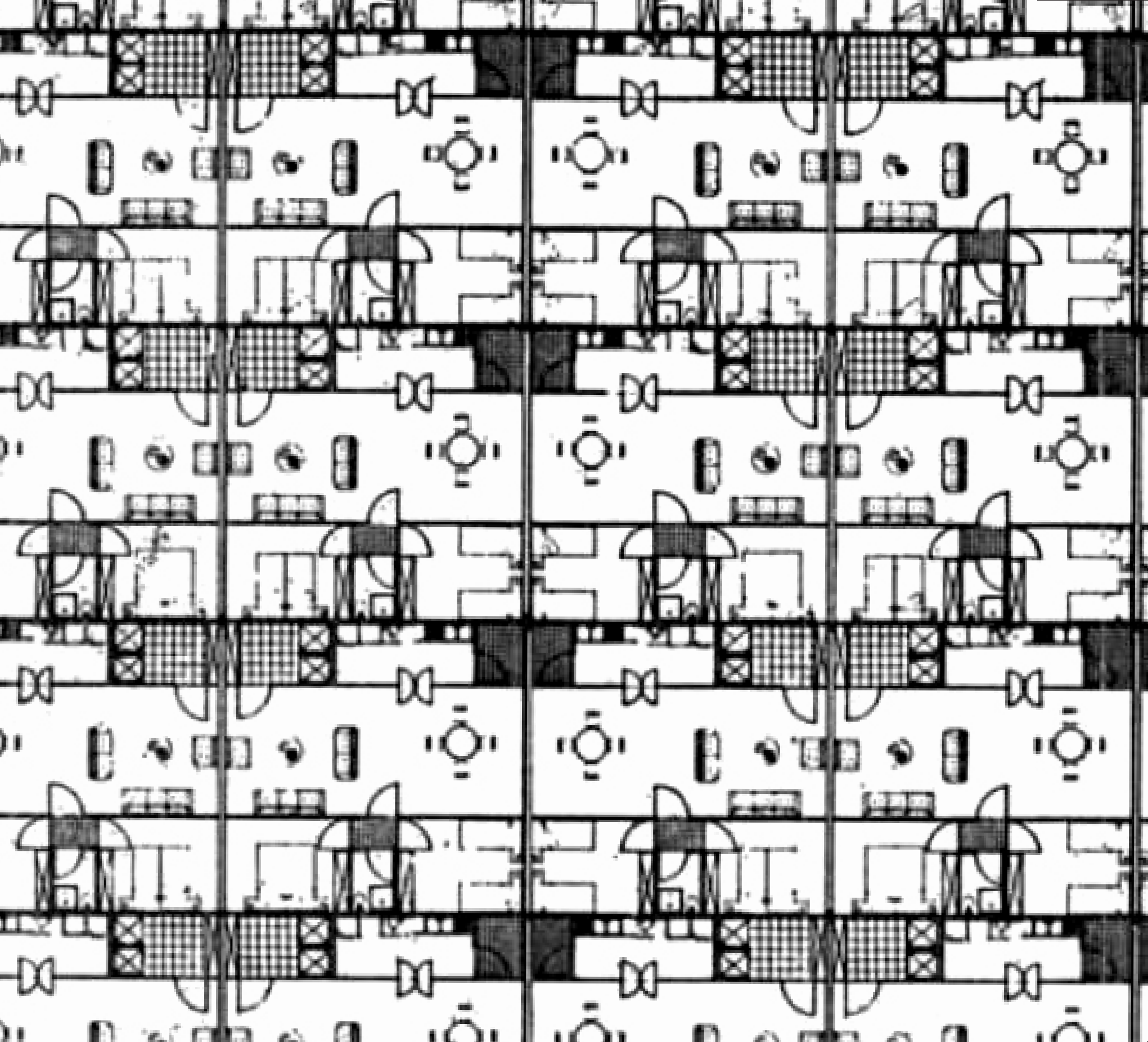
protruding fingers of suburbs engulfing the middle landscapes of Skopje  
the process of suburbanizing the terrain beyond the metropolis began in the middle of the 2000's.  
ten years later the sprawls are just gathering velocity and limitlessly spreading over the terrain.



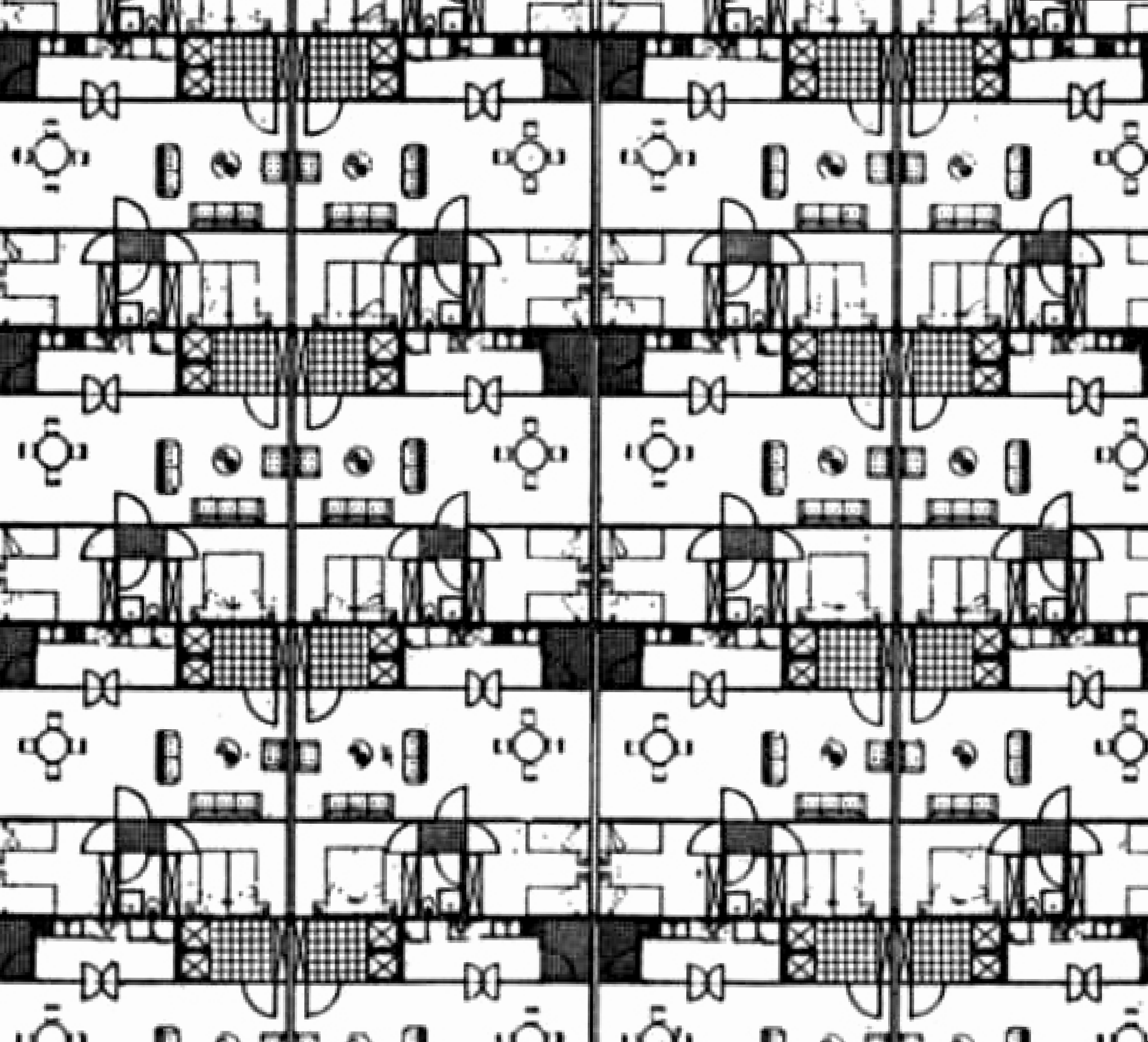
^ - MAP OF SKOPJE INDICATING THE FINGERS OF URBAN SPRAWLS, THE NEW SUBURBS

< - LEVITTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, 1992, USA

v - ARCHIZOOM ASSOCIATI, NON-STOP CITY, 1969





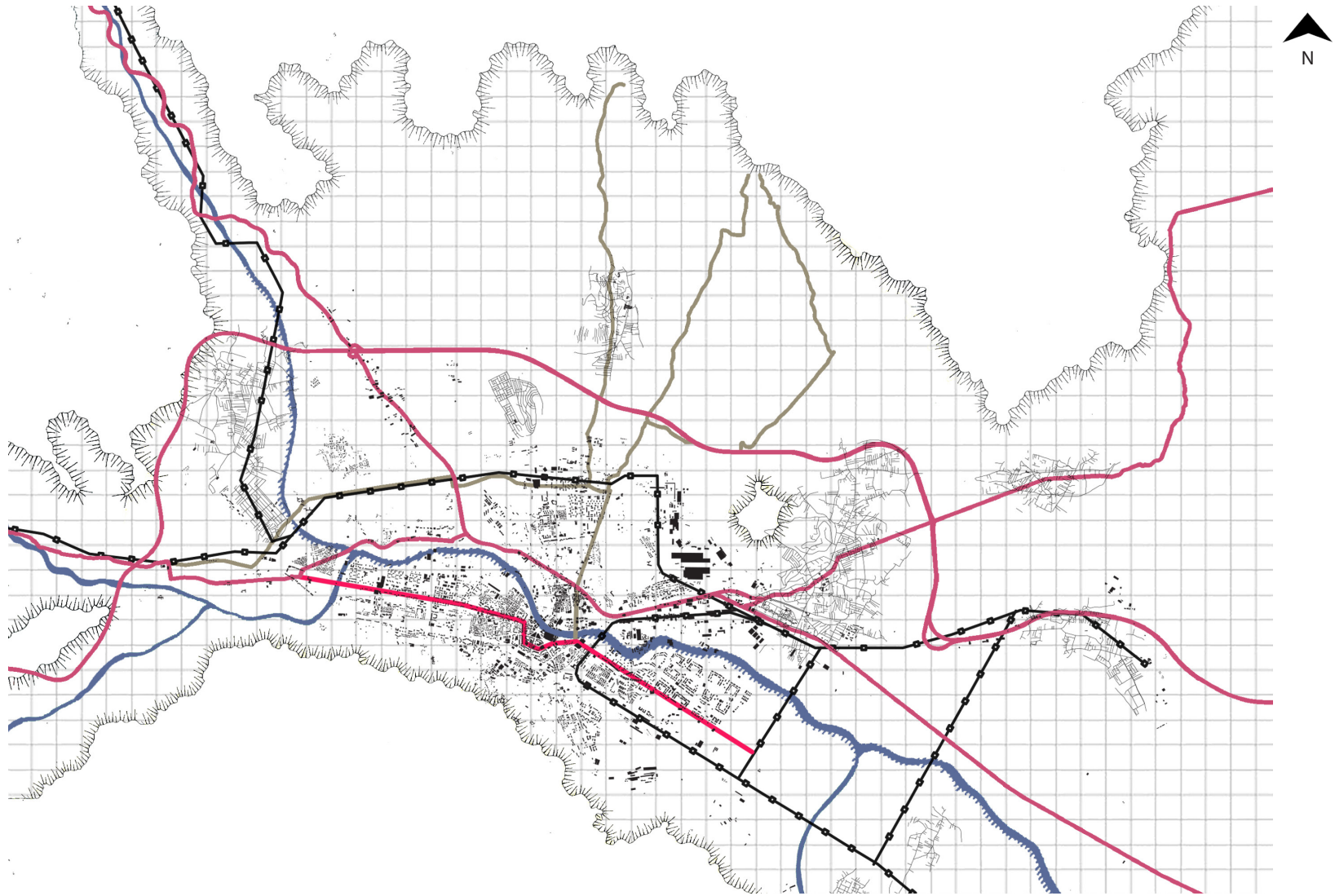




## ELEMENTS OF THE LANDSCAPE

### middle landscapes

entering the regional metropolis, the terrain vague. In order to understand this middle landscape it is important to demarcate its elements into fields. *"The signs made by man or nature determine a formal ensemble that can be demarcated"* - Vittorio Gregotti

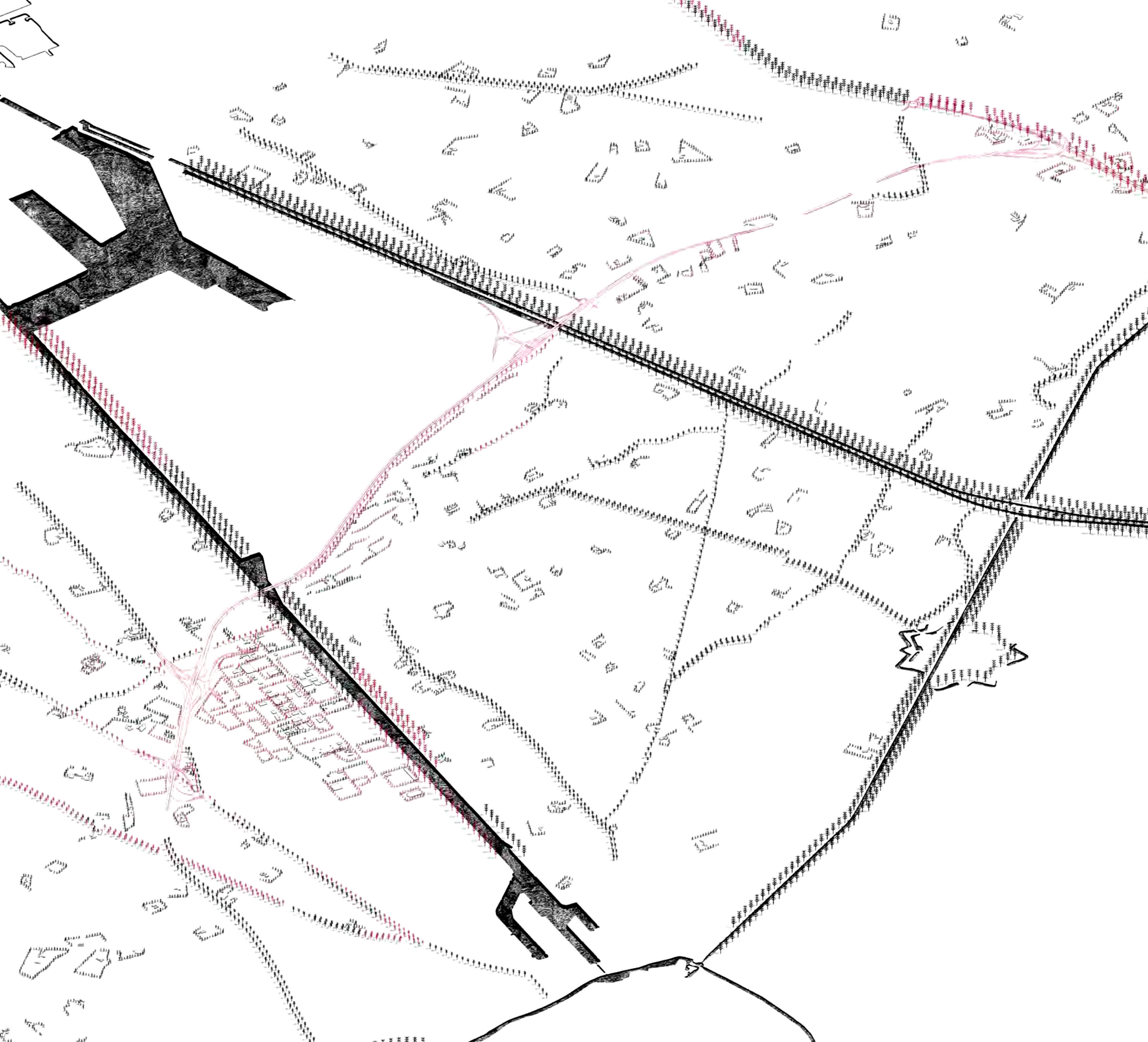


^ - MAP OF SKOPJE SHOWING ITS CURRENT SITUATION ENCLAVED WITHIN THE VALLY, ITS FOOTPRINT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

< - REM KOOLHAS + OMA, NEW SEOUL INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, KOREA, 1995

Part Two: In close proximity to Skopje







## TERRAIN VAGUE

the regional metropolis of Skopje

enclaved between the mountains and the built lays the indeterminate terrain vague of Skopje.

its boundary is steadily decreasing.



^ - MAP OF SKOPJE DEMARCATING THE TERRAIN VAGUE, THE NORTHERN MIDDLE LANDSCAPE

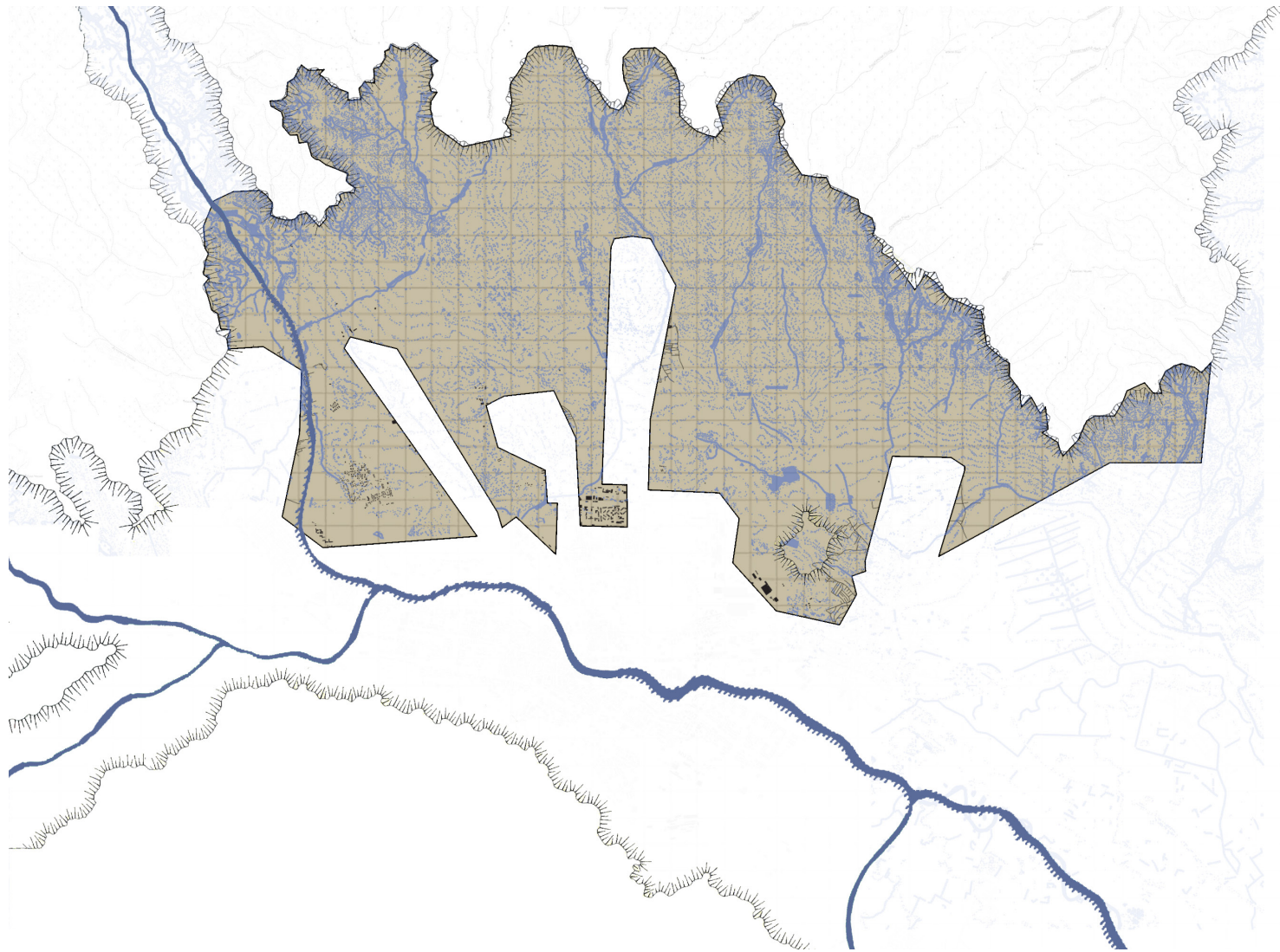
< - BUREAU BAS SMETS, A11 MOTORWAY, WEST FLANDERS, BELGIUM, 2011 - 2017



## WATER CAPILLARIES AS NEW CONNECTORS

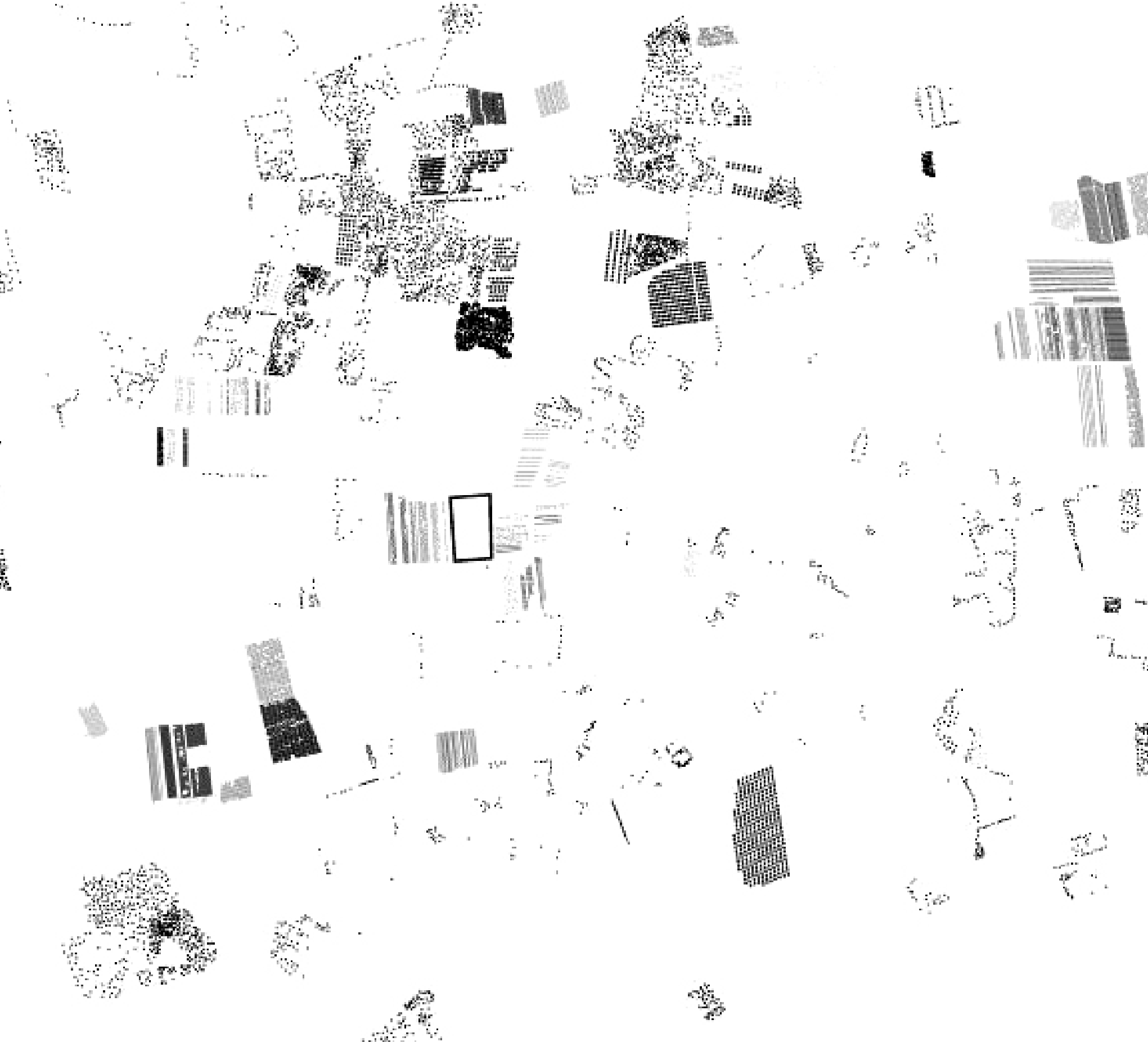
### exploring alternative connections in the landscape

now, essentially, the terrain has been demarcated into several fields, each unique and itself limited. However, this limitation should transcend the factual and geomorphological boundaries if we are to discover concepts and operations unknown. Are streams the new roads?



^ - MAP OF SKOPJE SHOWING PRIMARY AND SECONDARY WATER SYSTEMS OF THE MIDDLE LANDSCAPE

< - BUREAU BAS SMETS, DE PASSAGE EN VILLE, 2014

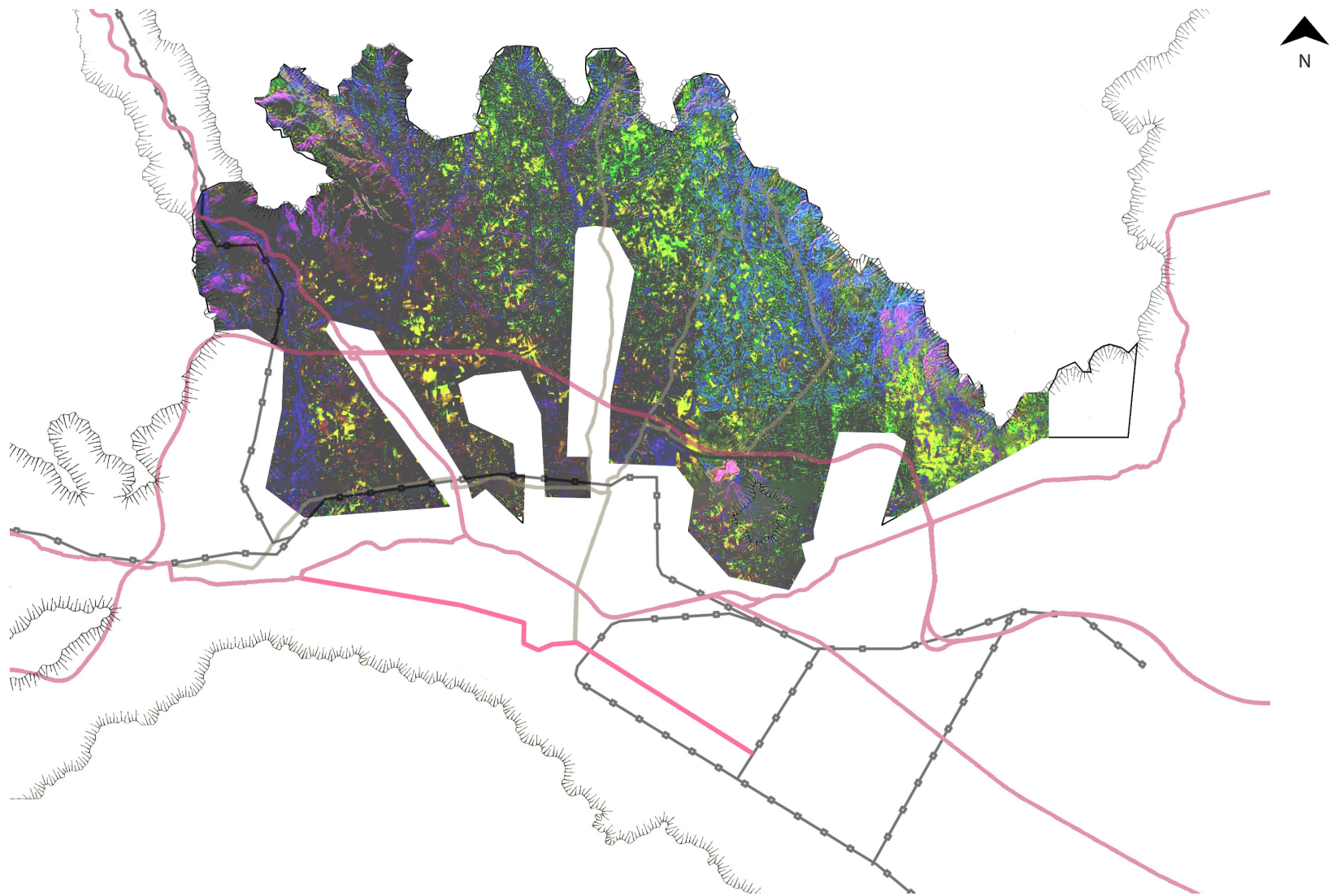




## AGRICULTURE AND TEXTURE

### defamiliarizing with initial agrarian connotations

what if one changes the understanding of this well established sign into something else. What if the agricultural field is no longer seen primarily for its land-productive feature but rather, for example, as a belt of transmission or a field connector.



^ - A MAP OF SKOPJE INDICATING THE VARIOUS LAND-USES OF THE TERRAIN BEYOND, MOSTLY AGRARIAN

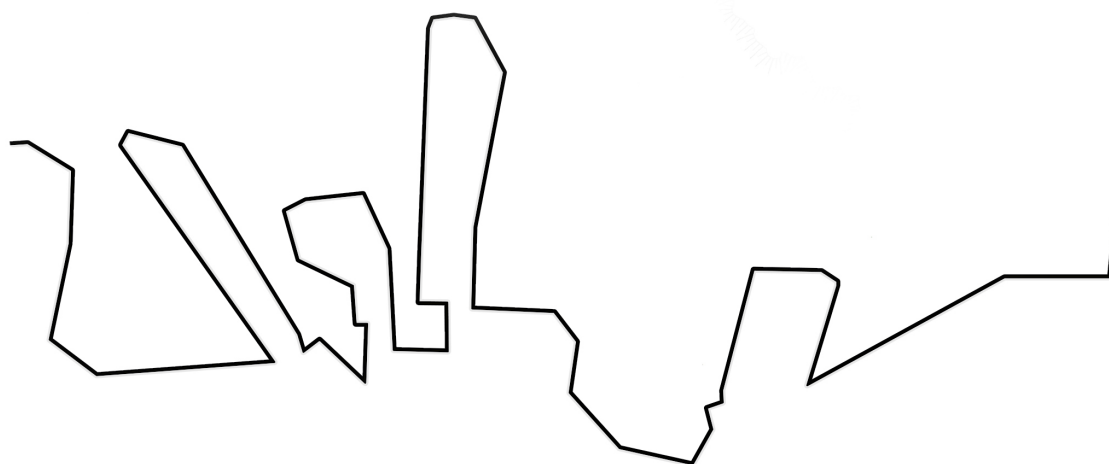
< - BUREAU BAS SMETS, GARDEN FOR A TREE NURSERER, HOUTVENNE, BELGIUM, 2007-2010



## BORDER CONDITIONS

the threshold between the smooth and striated space.

the line between the built and the agrarian. A motorway or a river. A fence or a wall. An edge.







## IMAGINED BORDER

a speculative extension

an opaque vision for future actions of the already existing "fingers".

an idea to create a different relationship between each border and its near landscape

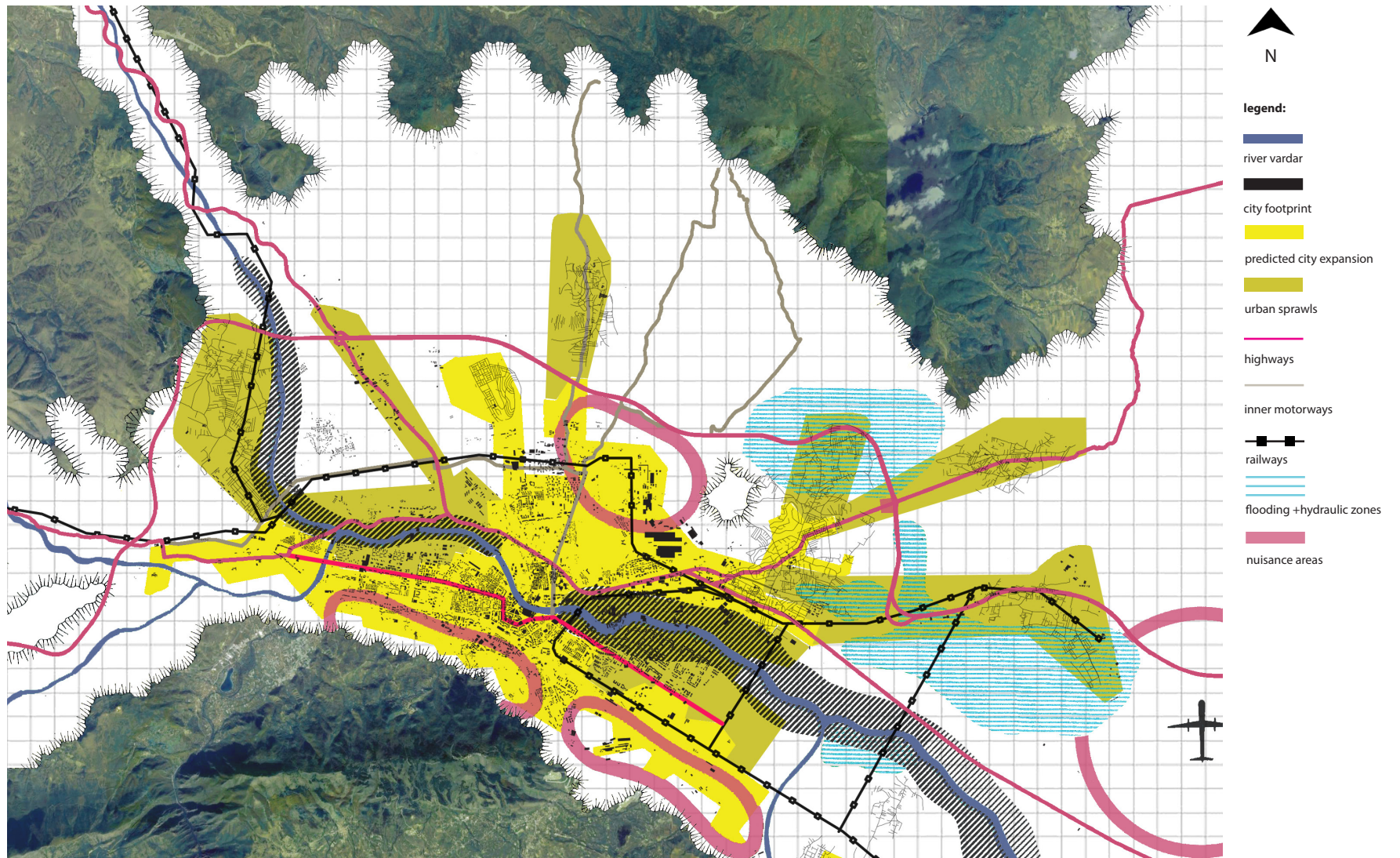




## A MASH MAP OF SKOPJE TODAY

a combined map of Skopje

this map captures Skopje in its geomorphology, infrastructure tapestry, nuisance areas, expanding suburbs, flooding and seismic zones.



^ - A COMBINED MAP OF SKOPJE

< - UNKNOWN AUTHOR, DRONE PHOTOGRAPHY, SKOPJE 2010

Part Two: In close proximity to Skopje

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## A PECULIAR PART OF SKOPJE'S MIDDLE LANDSCAPE

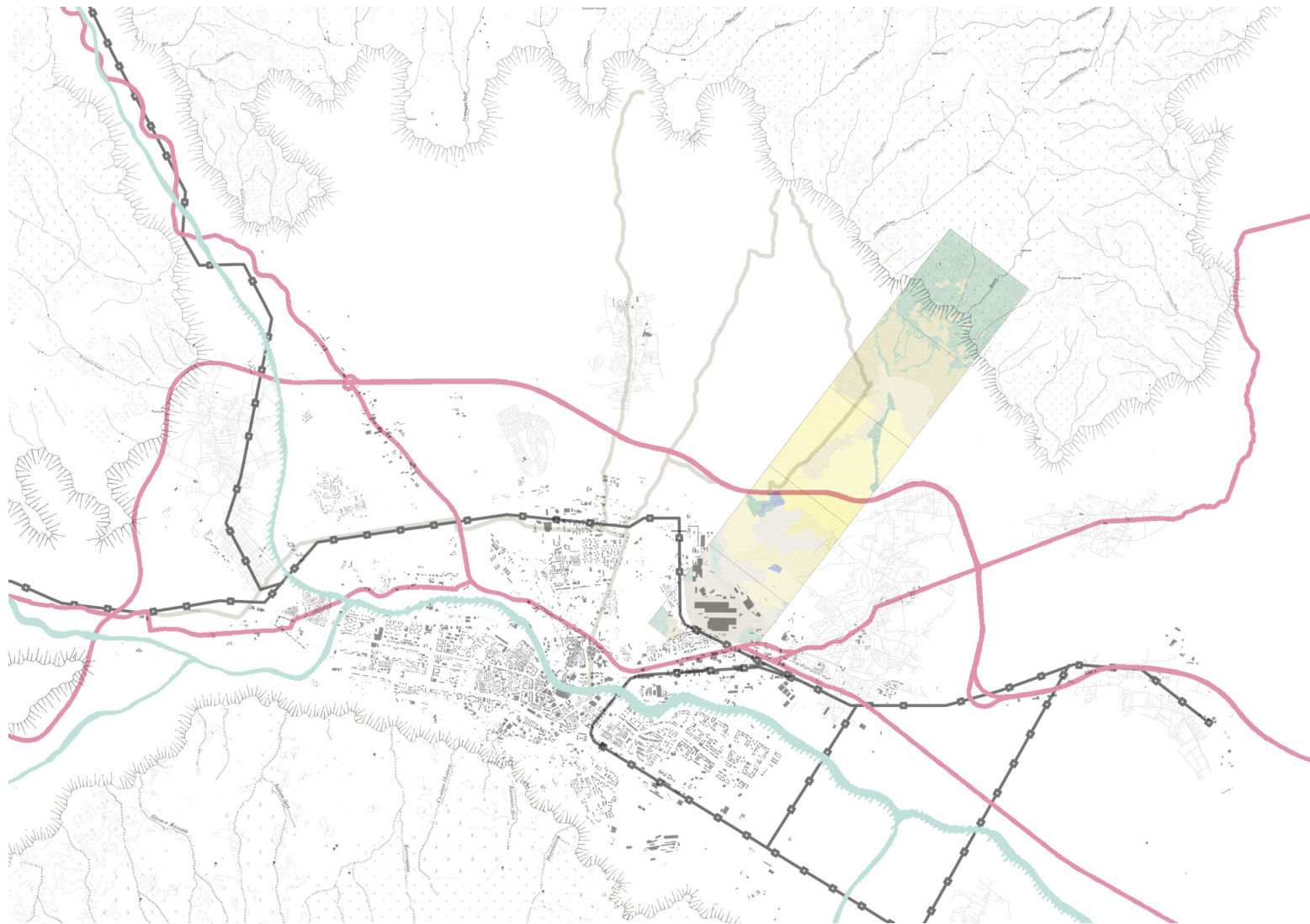
### a screenplay of a particular part of the middle landscape

What is a middle landscape? In his essay "Programming of urban surfaces", Alex Wall describes the effects of today's urbanization as complex and multiple, stating that three are of significance with regard to planning and design.

*"First is the rise of new kinds of urban sites. These are ambiguous areas that are caught between enclaves. They may even be so extensive as to constitute entire generic zones. These might be called peripheral sites, middle landscapes that are neither here nor there, and yet are so pervasive as to now characterize the dominant environment in which people actually live. In contrast, the old city centers are becoming increasingly themed around tourists and entertainment functions"*

A screenplay called "A peculiar part of Skopje's middle landscape" is not that difficult to understand. It is divided in five consecutive parts. Starting from the southern edge, the liminal zone between the metropolis and the landscape, dwells the "FE" (ferum) society. An offspring neighborhood of that old smelting factory. "The extraction of metal from molten ores". It is genuinely the most polluted area in the city and unfortunate for the community, blacksmith has gone out of fashion over a century ago. Moving north, between the factory and the motorway, one enters the second part of sequence. The void zone. Paradoxically adjacent to the smelting fields is this route-less, road-less agricultural void. Here exist no viable paths. One must walk through mud to get to the giant cornfields. The most popular car in the area is the old classic tractor. Beyond the void awaits the transit zone of the middle landscape. The heart and soul of the third part is the outrebound motorway of the city. This east-west spline materializes the administrative border of the city. Perpendicularly, towards the north, a set of capillary streets are plugged into the highway. To enter the fourth part one must follow these routes.

To enter the rural zone, one must exit the middle landscape. Until this point the terrain is very much flat. Climbing along the path, outskirts of village-houses accompanied by small farm stables or five by ten meters orangeries, can be found. These figures gravitate in a very close proximity to the road. However, behind the yards of the houses lays the omnipotent element of this zone. A very dense and highly fragmented agricultural field. The soil condition is very good. There are no trees and only sunlight, except for those heavy rains in the summers. Moving upwards, one enters the feral grounds at the edge of the mountain. The last part of our story. This is not a typical mountain. There are almost no trees but only shrubs and brittle grass. It is naked. Because of that, the inhabitants of the rural zone experience flooding and landslides when the rain is pouring. It is not a popular place to live. There is also very little wildlife or places to recreate. To corroborate this situation, in August of 2016, there was a disastrous flooding taking down almost 80% of the housing units and a horrid number of 22 drowned victims. Needless to say, a plan for this peculiar part is in order.



^ - INSERT TEXT ABOUT IMAGE AND AUTHOR, DATE, BOOK, PUBLISHED

< - REM KOOLHAAS + ELIA ZENGHELIS, EXODUS (OR THE VOLUNTARY PRISONERS OF ARCHITECTURE), 1972

Part Two: In close proximity to Skopje

